



RESEARCH PAPER

Voting Behavior of Unemployed Female's in Punjab: An Assessment

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the factors influencing voting behavior among unemployed females in Pakistan, assessing their awareness of vote significance, candidate preferences, and reasons for low voter turnout. Female political participation is essential for gender equality, yet Pakistan ranks second lowest on the Global Gender Gap Index. Social and political factors, especially cultural norms and family restrictions, significantly impact women's electoral engagement. A quantitative research approach was adopted, using structured questionnaires to gather data on voting trends among unemployed females. Findings reveal that political unawareness and family-imposed limitations are key contributors to low female voter turnout. To enhance democratic participation, the study recommends integrating electoral education into school and college curricula and launching awareness campaigns to empower women as informed, active citizens. These steps are vital for improving gender inclusivity in Pakistan's political landscape and fostering a stronger democratic culture that values women's voices in electoral processes.

KEYWORDS Elections, Females, Unemployed, Pakistan, Voting Behavior

Introduction

In this modern world, democracy is practice all over the world. Voting Behavior is the way that different people tend to vote. Pakistan is also a democratic country. 11 General Elections held since after the birth of the country. First General Elections were held in 1970, almost after 23 years of the birth of the country. For the first in democratic history of Pakistan, Election Commission of Pakistan introduces specific amendment to measure the gender-segregated voter turnout for General Elections in 2013. Many social and political factors influence the voting behavior of the people like caste affiliation, family affiliation, income level, education, gender, Party campaign and Charismatic personality of the leader etc.

Literature review

"Voting behavior in rural and urban areas of Punjab" as a tool of voting behavior. It has great impact on the people of Punjab. Flaws in our electoral system strengthen this system. Researcher also focuses on the Cultural elements in politics. Basically researcher talk about three things in his research, meaning and role of Biradarism, division of urban and rural areas, religious groups and political parties role in voting behavior. Researcher choose very good topic and done appreciate able work. He beautifully explains the voting behavior of the urban and rural people of the Punjab. He discussed the root causes of voting behavior of the people of the Punjab. But he only describes the voting behavior of

the District Faisalabad. He didn't analyze voting behavior of the District Sialkot (Ahmad, 2012).

Qualitative method of study used in this research to understand the topic in depth. 20 interviews and 2 focused group discussions were conducted for the results. Religion, economic and patriarchal mindset restricted the female participation in politics. Participation of women increase can increase in politics by giving them awareness and policy making at National level. Researcher has done the great work. Researchers discuss the overall Pakistani female participation in politics. They should discuss the unemployed females Participation in politics or elections.

The main objective of his research is to explore the voting behavior of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with reference of 2008 elections along its comparison with 2002 and 2013 elections. He focuses on the party identification, issue voting, religious voting and ethnic voting in the politics of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He choose very interesting topic for his research. Many researchers choose voting behavior as their study but no one work on the voting behavior of the unemployed females of District Sialkot. I will assess the voting behavior of the unemployed females of District Sialkot. Because unemployed female also play an important role in electing their representatives (Ullah, 2014).

“Together we will: Evidence from a field experiment on female Voter turnout in Pakistan” Xavier Gine, Development Research Group, The World Bank and Ghazala Mansuri, Poverty and Equity Global practice and Development Research Group. The World Bank works on the female voting behavior in Pakistan. The main objective of this study is to explore the female voting behavior in Pakistan. In present era females are less likely to vote. But when they do, they don't do according to their own wishes. Male members influence their voting behavior. They have done great work. But their work is about all females, married, unmarried, housewives and working women (Muzaffar, et. al., 2018; Mansuri, 2013).

Material and Methods

The nature of this study is quantitative, aiming to investigate the voting behavior of unemployed females. The population for this research comprised unemployed women residing in NA-73, specifically ward numbers 5 and 6 of District Sialkot. Unemployed females, for the purpose of this study, are defined as those who are not engaged in any paid employment or running any business. A sample size of 100 respondents was selected using a purposive sampling technique, focusing on individuals who fit the defined criteria. The instrument used for data collection was an open-ended survey questionnaire designed to capture in-depth responses related to voting behavior and political awareness To ensure the efficacy and clarity of the survey items, a pilot test was carried out on a small portion of the population prior to the entire data collection. Validity and reliability were ensured by expert review of the instrument and consistent administration procedures. Throughout the research process, ethical considerations included securing informed consent from each participant, maintaining response confidentially, and honoring the voluntary character of participation.

Factors that influence the Voting behavior of the Unemployed females

In this part, factors are discussed that influenced the Voting behavior of the unemployed females. There are so many factors that influence the voting behavior of the unemployed females. e.g. family affiliation, caste, party affiliation, gender, patriarchal norms of society, ethnicity etc. To understand the factors that influence the voting

behavior, first we need to understand the term “voting behavior”. Voting Behavior is the way that different people tend to vote. By understanding the term “voting behavior”, political scientist can understand why certain people vote for different parties and political parties can also predict that who might vote for them in future. It helps them to plan party agenda, policies, communication etc.

Caste affiliation

Caste is a permanent factor which is assign at the time of birth of any person. Caste system is a social setup in which castes are dividing by inheritance. Caste system is very strong in Pakistan. Pakistani society is divided into subclasses. Some castes are marked as highly respectable (Rafique, 2014). Top 7 castes in Pakistan are Butt, Jutt, Rajput, Sheikh, Mughal Gujjar and Qureshi (saddiqui, 2019).The caste system is more dominant in rural areas, especially in Punjab province. People recognize each other on the basis of caste. Political system of Punjab is mainly based on caste system. Social ties between candidate and voter based on common caste are the strongest factors to achieve desired outcomes at the time of elections (usman,2017).

Family affiliation

It is widely believed that children copy their parent’s attitude and beliefs. Communication is a most important component in family environment and these communication patterns influence political attitudes and behavior of the individuals. When different families communicate with each other, they effect the political beliefs and behaviors of each other (Ahmed, et. al., 2015).The significant portion of political socialization process occurs within a family. Childrens can also influence the political beliefs of the parents through school programs for example kids voting and other co-circular activities (Hoffman, 2012). According to a 2009 study in the “Journal of Politics”, parents who are more politically active and have consistent views on politics tend to influence their children’s political views more than parents who are less politically active or those who change their views on issues (Jacewicz, 2017).

Party affiliation

Individuals and groups of people learn a lot about elections and democracy from political parties. In developing countries, motivating voters to go out and do vote is entirely the responsibility of political parties. Ideological attachment with political parties has significant influence on voting behavior in Pakistan. Association between political parties’ ideologies and voting behavior is remarkable. Many religious and nationalist parties also exist in Pakistan with ideological supporters. Ideological voters normally do vote continuously to political parties to whom they are ideologically attached. Those who considered themselves attached with a specific party, their vote casting is a pre-decided that is why party affiliates rarely affected with election campaigns. The rising importance of political parties is because of raising awareness among people and powerful election campaign of political parties (Badshah, 2018).

Patriarchal norms of society

The male head-up society deprive women from active in politics. In reality, on the basis of race, class, ethnicity, education and cultural background all females’ positions are not same in society. Refusal of females in Parliament is the barrier for increasing democratic principles in society; also the men control the political process does not follow equal gender interest. Lack of access of information and education also play vital role to

hamper female's involvement in politics. Moreover, due to lack of confidence females are away from politics. Generally, females admit politics as dirty game and they don't feel secure in cheer to participate in politics (Rahman, 2014). Political activities are referred to gender where men are responsible allocate higher positions while women are not expect the same. According to this situation, women's are not ready to take part in country's politics. Due to social and cultural values women are supposed to allocate lower position in society specifically kept out from politics (Asad, 2017).

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Factors that influence your voting behavior.

Family affiliation	Caste affiliation	Party affiliation	Gender	Personality	Other
29%	13%	50%	1%	2%	5%

Preference to elect the candidate

Political agenda

Political agenda is a list of subjects or problems to which political parties are paying serious attention at any given time. Before elections, political parties describe their party agenda or campaign agenda to influence voting behavior of the people. In party or campaign agenda parties decide policy position, importance of issues, grant their resources and select their candidates (Martinez, 2019). Issue ownership theory claim that political parties stress policy issues on which they are comparatively efficient by raising the public importance of the issue that they own, political parties try to guide public discourse toward issues on which they have expertise over opposition. In comparison, the riding the wave theory claims that issue competitiveness is instead a bottom-up process in which political parties counter to the issue priorities of public. Political parties try to stress policy issues that are currently important in the mind of voters to harvest electoral gains (Kluver, 2016).

Charismatic personality

A charismatic person can not only emerge assertive in conveyance but they can also assist others feel assertive too. Charismatic leaders can motivate their followers to do things that might seem illogical. Charismatic people are usually good at portraying in way that make others accept what they see (Tskhay, 2018). Max Weber defines Charismatic leadership in terms of "a certain quality of individual personality, by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities". Ronald Riggio finds that "Charismatic leaders have powerful fluency talent and they are very talented in reading social situations as well as others people's minds. Charismatic leadership becomes important when people are tired with existing political hierarchy of a group or in need of change. Charisma is no doubt the oldest form of leadership that human knows because it is found on the unusual personal qualities of an individual.

Honesty

Honesty of the leader is most appraising leadership worth; it serves as the gateway for trust and creativity. Honesty is what we expect first and prime to our leader (Bunting, 2016). The most important side of personal character is honesty and trustworthy that a voter mostly see. The personal characteristics of candidate obtain significant attention in Presidential Elections of 2004 in United States of America. Republicans charged Kerry for being contrary on the issues where as Democrats claimed that Bush failed to be honest with

American public about Iraq. Both candidates try to present themselves as powerful and honest leaders. Voters considered character of candidates seriously and candidates have often concentrated on such qualities when they felt that it would be favorable to do so (Scavo, 2004).

Professional Background

A candidate's professional background provides information to voters about candidate's expertise and capacity, which voter can effectively depend on when making a voting decision. Occupational background plays an important role in voting behavior of the people. Some professional backgrounds simply lead to considerable electoral success than other professional back grounds. Voter emerges to use professional status as suggestion for their voting decisions. People distinctly connect professions with obvious skills set (Coffe, 2016).

Table 2
Preference to elect the candidate.

Campaign Agenda	Charismatic Personality	Party Affiliation	Honesty	Professional Background
29%	28%	39%	3%	1%

Awareness about the significance of vote

Elections, an important characteristic of Democracy

Casting the vote is one of the most distinct characteristic of Democratic Political life. Women have little and destitute sources of knowledge about the significance of political involvement and electoral process, may be due to less illiteracy and restrictions.

Educational institution should create awareness among students to vote for the right person in elections as awareness is very important for the elections in Democracy. Without awareness and electoral education, legislature, public accountability and good governess is impossible (Hasnaat, 2018). Voters can conduct change through ballot which stands low in the Pakistan's history. The democratic procedure can be strengthening by casting vote by every adult (Abbas, 2017). On 21st March 1948 at a Public meeting in Dhaka, Quaid-e-Azam said "Remember, now it is in your hands to put the government in power or remove the government from power, but you must not do it by mob methods. You have the power, you must learn the art to use it, and you must try and understand the machinery therefore the whole thing is in your hands." (ECP Newsletter , 2013).

Table 3
Have awareness about the significance of your vote.

Yes	No
86%	14%

Table 4
Have you cast vote in elections.

Yes	No
74%	26%

Reasons behind low female voter turnout

Gender inequality in Pakistani Politics

According to the Global Gender Gap Index, Pakistan categorizes second lowest country in the world for gender equality. Women's political involvement is acknowledge

as necessary part for gender equality and in Pakistan the gender inequality in political involvement is very high. According to the results of survey, the issues that are important to females are dissimilar from the issues that are important for male. In Pakistan's 2018 general elections, the male-female gap in voter turnout stood at 9.1% with 11 million fewer women practice their right to vote than men. Women face a number of hurdles to greater political involvement both legal and social (Cheema, Khan, 2019). One of the manageable steps in this modern age of Democracy is getting women to vote, Pakistan still fight to get its women to come out and vote. Almost 48.8% of Pakistan's total population consists of females. Yet, female voter turnout is continuously low. Especially when it comes to rural areas, where there are still women's who are not allowed to vote (sarfraz, 2018).

Religious Values

Religions are attentive to affect political attitudes. In general elections of 2018 female voting was prohibited in some areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Something alike must have happened in many other areas of the country. Women's in Kerai were not allowed to cast vote. An 85 years old local person, Bahr-i-Rome says "we will not let our women cast votes". He further says that voting by women violate our tradition of Haya. Gul Husain, another local of Kerai, says "we local people are not against women's right to vote but can't allow them to vote at polling station where men also vote". He further says "Islam doesn't allow the mixing of male and female" and another reasons he says why women in Kerai never vote is because the polling staff that deal with them is generally male and we can't let our women unveil their faces in front of male election staff to prove their identity. He says male polling staff male army personal and policeman were deploying inside the polling stations inside booths allocated only for females (Dastageer, 2018).

Political unawareness

Political awareness doesn't mean knowing about every individual MNA or MPA of your country, or being able to list every party and their history. It has more to do with the fundamental understanding of the political framework of your country, the major parties within that framework and the mandate that you feel is good for you or set with your interest. But the problem is that people even don't know about the candidates who contest election from their constituency. The basic problem is people are unaware about the framework of the politics. Political and legal awareness is important for the people to know about their constitutional rights (Anjum, 2017). Democracy knows to be rule by the people but the people know little about of what they rule over. Political unawareness is a world-wide and determined problem in modern democracies. Much evidence shows that the public is uneducated about many features of government and public policy. The public is also uneducated about the fundamental structure of government (Somin, 2014).

Table 5
Reasons behind the low female voter turnout in Pakistan

Religious Values	Political unawareness	Family Restrictions	Busy life	Inconvenience
2%	68%	28%	1%	1%

It is need of hour to educate unemployed females about the electoral politics and aware them about the significance of vote. The result of the survey show that many females don't know about the significance of the vote. Many females don't even know the name of the candidates of their constituency. They thought they have nothing to do with politics. It is the field of their male relations. Many of them, who cast their vote, said their family influences their voting decision. They don't even know on which basis they cast their vote in previous elections. If we want to become a democratic country in real meanings we have

to give electoral educations to our females at basic level. we should teach them at school and college level about electoral education.

Conclusion

Voting behavior is a form of electoral behavior and it has been a central concern for political scientist. By understanding the term "Voting Behavior", political scientist can understand why certain people vote for different parties. Many social and political factors influence the voting behavior of the people like caste affiliation, family affiliation, income level, education, gender, party affiliation and charismatic personality of the leader, patriarchal norms of society, ethnicity etc. People prefer different things while casting vote. For example campaign agenda, Charismatic personality, party affiliation, honesty, background etc. Before elections, political parties describe their party agenda to influence voting behavior of the people. Election campaign can be an important determinant of election outcomes. According to the Global Gender Gap Index, Pakistan categorizes second lowest country in the world for gender equality. In this modern age of democracy, Pakistan still fights to get its women to come out and vote. Beside patriarchal norms of society that holding women back, there are number of challenges and difficulties that women face when it comes to voting. Especially, when it comes to rural areas. Many females don't even know the name of the candidates of their constituency. They thought they have nothing to do with politics. It is the field of their male relations. Many of them, who cast their vote, said their family influences their voting decision. They don't even know on which basis they cast their vote in previous elections. It is need of hour to educate unemployed females about the electoral politics.

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